



# Central European University Alumni Volunteer Toolkit

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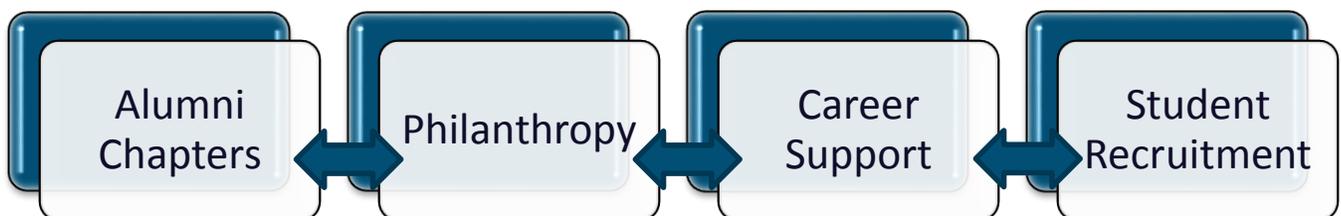
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# Alumni Volunteering – Staying Connected and Engaged with CEU

Volunteering is one of many ways you can stay involved and contribute to your alma mater. Throughout CEU's history, over 600 alumni volunteers have made a difference in the lives of students and alumni every day. You can lead a local alumni chapter, organize events, fundraise for student scholarships, support career development of students and fellow alumni and help us recruit global talent.

Whether you have just a few minutes or are looking for a long-term engagement, we value your time and your strengths and hereby welcome you to join CEU's community of alumni volunteers via different ways. Visit our [Volunteer Hub](#) to find out more.



*“CEU was an amazing opportunity for me, giving me an opportunity not only to study in a highly-qualified academic atmosphere but also to grow personally. I volunteer for the chapter because I want to help others to have the same opportunity and to express my gratitude to the university.”*

Anna Pambukhchyan (IRES '12, Armenia, Chapter Leader)

# Volunteering with Alumni Chapters

*The work of an alumni chapter focuses on the following:*

1. **Fundraising** – take part in the Annual Alumni Fundraising Campaign by donating and encouraging your fellow alumni to donate to support various causes at CEU. Check out different Funds alumni can support.
2. **Alumni social events** – organize chapter ‘happy hours’, reunions, celebrations, meeting with CEU faculty and staff travelling to their city.
3. **Welcoming new students and alumni** – welcome alumni relocating to your area or prepare incoming students for their life at CEU through Pre-departure Orientations.

***Within a chapter, there are 2 roles for alumni volunteers:***

1. **Chapter Leader** – this is a person who leads and oversees the chapter while engaging local alumni and taking initiatives on her/his own.
2. **Chapter contact** – this is a less demanding role where an alum serves as a focal point and helps organize various events/gatherings upon request of CEU.

## ALUMNI CHAPTERS

Wherever in the world, you’re never far from your fellow CEU alumni. There are approximately 100 alumni chapters based in cities, countries and regions around the world, expanding our community by hosting special guests, organizing events, recruiting students and more. **Find your local chapter** and connect with your classmates today.

*No chapter in your area?  
Here is how you can start one.*

A **CEU Alumni chapter** is an informal entity promoting university’s mission and priorities in their localities, and serving as a bridge between the alumni and the university.

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## **Getting started:**

Decide what kind of group you'd like—a small local club for friends and classmates or a large national chapter, etc. Once you have an idea ...

- [Contact us](#) to see how many CEU alumni are in your area.
- **Start a Facebook group and add local alumni** - this would simplify communication and help you connect to alumni in your area. Here is an example of [CEU Alumni & Friends in New York City](#). Use a similar name as it makes it easy for alumni to search – they just need to change the name of the city/country. Make sure that someone from the CEU Alumni Relations Office (ARO) has admin rights so they can admit new members and help monitor the group (currently, membership is limited to alumni, students and faculty or staff).
- **Reach out to alumni you know** - invite your alumni friends to join the chapter Facebook group and ask them to promote it among their former classmates and CEU friends. The ARO team can also share the link to the Facebook group in their communication with alumni in your area.
- **Search for alumni in your area** - LinkedIn is a great search tool for this. If you have CEU as your university on your LinkedIn profile, you will be able to search for CEU alumni based in your city/country. For this, you need to log in to your LinkedIn Account → Search for Central European University → See alumni → Search by key words: start/end dates of their study at CEU, location, employer or position.
- **Share your information for our website** - provide a short bio, high resolution portrait photo and e-mail address that we can share on our website. This way, alumni can easily see and reach out to you if and when they are in your city. You can check the [CEU Alumni Chapter Leaders](#) page to see sample bios. It should be a 100word summary detailing your professional background and decision to volunteer with CEU.
- **Introduce yourself** - after setting up your profile ask the ARO team to formally introduce you to local alumni. They can send e-mail introducing you to the alumni community and invite them to join the Facebook group and any events you plan to organize.
- **Meet with local alumni** - you can organize a social gathering with local alumni. This a great way to get to know them, introduce yourself as well as discuss plans for the chapter and get their feedback. The ARO team can help promote your event by

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sending it on your behalf to local alumni and sharing it on its website and social media channels.

- **Draft an action plan for the chapter** - share with us your ideas and plans for the chapter. What do you plan to do as a chapter leader, what kind of events you would like to organize, how would you make sure that these events are interesting, relevant and attended by alumni. You can rely on alumni input and ask ARO team for feedback. Need ideas for events? Check out the *Alumni Event Planning Guide* below.
- **Reach out to active chapters** - you can check [Alumni Groups Worldwide](#) to discover active alumni chapters and reach out to learn from their experiences and get ideas for leading a chapter.
- **Join the [CEU Alumni Leaders Facebook group](#)** - this is a platform for active alumni leaders to share thoughts, ideas, initiatives and resources with peers.

*"Being able to volunteer as an Alumni Chapter Leader allows me to keep the connection and still be part of CEU."*

Petra Chaloupkova (NATI '11, Czechia,  
Chapter Leader)

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## Alumni Event Planning Guide

### Before the Event

- **Define the goal**
  - Why to have an event? What is this event trying to accomplish?
  - Who is the target group? E.g. all alumni, those with families, alumni in particular sector
  - How does it fit into your yearly chapter plan?
  - Is this event scalable? Could it become an event series?
- **Set the date and time**
  - Pick a date and time
  - Give enough notice - ideally, you should have 2 months to plan it
  - Pick a day of the week when most alumni are likely to attend. Based on our practice Wednesdays and Thursdays work the best
  - Schedule the event after working hours
  - Confirm the dates with the venue to make sure it is available
  - Check the [alumni events calendar](#) to see if anything else is happening in your area on the same date(s)
  - Keep in mind local trends, traffic, travel habits, workday schedule and national holidays as they might affect the timing of this event
- **Select and book a venue**
  - Book a venue
  - Is it an indoor or outdoor event? If outdoor, have a rain plan
  - Make sure there is enough space and participants are able to hear each other

### At the event

- Register participants
- Socialize with alumni and collect feedback
- Share updates from CEU
- Deliver the planned program, if any
- Take a few photos/videos and post them on your chapter Facebook group

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## Post Event

- Thank event participants by e-mail or via Facebook group
- Post pictures from events on your chapter's Facebook group
- Share some highlights and photos with the ARO team

## How can the Alumni Relations team help?

- Talk through ideas with you
- Help plan your event
- Reach out to well-known alumni to invite as a guest speaker
- Help organize event when CEU leadership, faculty or staff travels to your area
- Promote your event among local alumni
  - Send e-mail invite to alumni in your area\*
  - Share it on social media channels
  - Create a web event and registration form
  - Collect and share RSVPs
- Support financially if it meets the criteria for Alumni Chapter Grant.

## \*Share your invite with ARO team with following info:

- Date and time
- Location
- Event program
- Link to the Facebook event
- Name of the contact person

*"To put it simple, I want to reciprocate. CEU has given me an invaluable opportunity, environment and support system - now it is my turn to gladly give something in return."*

Amila Kurtovic (LEGS ' 16, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Chapter Leader)

## Ideas for Alumni Events

### Educational

#### Could include:

- Event with a local faculty speaker
- Local alumni speaker

#### Examples:

**CEU faculty lecture:** Czech alumni chapter organized a speaker event by inviting alumni speaker and former CEU Rector, Professor Josef Jařab.

**Coffee & cake for new students:** Chapter leader in Kazakhstan organized a joint event for her fellow alumni and newly accepted students over coffee and CEU branded cake.

**Education fair:** Russian alumni chapter leaders attended *EducationUSA* fair to represent CEU and attract prospective students.



### Social

#### Could include:

- Welcome new graduates or alumni to your area
- Food parties - oyster roast, crab feast, clam bake, chili fest
- Wine/Beer tastings
- Book clubs
- Movie nights
- Annual Dinner
- Monthly social gatherings at a local bar or restaurant – including interactive games
- Ice-skating
- Seasonal gatherings

**Example:** New York Chapter organized Friendsgiving Dim Sum and Christmas dinner with fellow alumni in town.



## Professional Development

### Could include:

- Company or facility tours
- Career or networking seminars
- Speed networking
- Career & education fairs
- Student Recruitment visits

**Example:** Belgian chapter leader held a planning session to collect alumni feedback and plan future activities.



## Cultural

### Could include:

- Museum or art exhibitions
- Monument or landmark tour
- Theater performances
- Guided walking tours
- Lectures, workshops /mini concerts
- Book signings

**Example:** Austrian alumni chapter organized Walk and Talk tour at the Schonbrunn Park to celebrate spring and friendship.

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# Fundraising for CEU

Giving to CEU is an important way for alumni to remain engaged with the university and to help move it forward. Large or small, every gift to the CEU Alumni Campaign, [CEUimpact](#), helps support the future of this unique institution.

Alumni can help fundraise to support causes such as student scholarships, academic departments, campus redevelopment and unrestricted fund. Since 2001 CEU alumni have helped provide scholarships to 262 MA students from around the world. Alumni have also established their own philanthropic projects, such as those in Belarus, Ukraine, Serbia, and Russia as a means to support students from those countries.

## **Why should you organize a fundraising event?**

- Raise money for the CEU Alumni Campaign
- Increase CEU's visibility
- Engage alumni chapter members and strengthen positive relations with campus faculty, administration and community organizations
- Develop leadership and organizational skills
- Establish an annual future of community giving

## **Who to contact?**

- CEU Alumni Relations Office; [Nurangiz Khodzharova](#), in charge of alumni volunteers and [Bruno Hasa](#), in charge of alumni fundraising
- Other alumni in your chapter who might be interested in organizing the event

## **Before you start**

- Choose your cause (student's scholarship, CEU department, campus)
- Make sure you have a clear beneficiary (transparency is the key)
- Set a fundraising (monetary) goal
- Determine amount of money that needs to be invested (is it profitable?)
- Make sure you have enough manpower (alumni volunteers you can count on)
- Select your target group (fellow alumni in chapters)
- Ensure event's sustainability. Is this a project that could be held on an annual basis?

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## Plan the event

- Set a date (be aware of holidays and other similar events)
- Find a location (needs to be appropriate for the event and plan for rain)
- Come up with a detailed program (set up the activities and the timeframe)
- Publicize the event – come up with a social media friendly invitation and set up the Facebook event page
- Invite people - write a short but comprehensive invitation and Alumni Office will send out 'save the date' and invitation email to relevant people

## After the event

- Thank your participants
  - Prepare a social media thank you message and share it in the chapter group + in the event group
  - Alumni office sends formal acknowledgment email to those contributed
- Share the amount collected and compare it with your goal.
- Calculate the final expenses and write a report with recommendations for the next event (let's learn from our mistakes!)

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### Contact Details:

Nurangiz Khodzharova, Alumni Volunteer Programs  
Coordinator, [khodzharovan@ceu.edu](mailto:khodzharovan@ceu.edu)

# Helping with Student Recruitment

**31%** of our applicants have heard about CEU from current students or graduates like you! Having lived the CEU, you're the best ambassadors for your alma mater. We rely on you in recruiting the next generation of CEU students! This is how you can help:

- You can give a **Presentation** about CEU  We'll get you ready! 
- You can **visit embassies or institutions** in your area  And help us get in touch for possible cooperation 
- You can tell us about an **education fair** in your area  We'd love to participate, or have you represent us! 
- Tell us about other **conferences or events** with recruitment potential  We have to be there! 
- Share with us information about **youth/student organizations or NGOs** that we could cooperate with in promoting CEU  We'd love to reach out to them! 
- Do you have in mind any **new social media channels?**  From Facebook, scholarship websites, email lists, to youth portals – those are all the places to promote CEU and our Call for Application for students in your country 
- Do you know someone who would **like to apply to CEU** and **connect** with current students or alumni?  Show them the Connect Page <https://www.ceu.edu/admissions/find-out-more/connect> 
- Did you meet the **Local CEU Representative** in your area?  Kindly check if there is one in your country at <https://www.ceu.edu/admissions/find-out-more/find-local-representatives> and get in touch with him/her for joint planning of recruitment activities. 
- Are you associated with a **university?**  You must connect us! Even if not, tell us about major universities in your area. 



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# Providing Career Support

CEU alumni can help support the professional development of CEU students and fellow alumni by,



**Sharing a fellowship, full-time position and/or summer internship opportunity with us.**

Do you know of an opportunity that might be of interest to the CEU community? Let us know, and we'll make sure to share the news with current students and alumni.



**Working with us to develop internship opportunities specifically tailored to CEU students.**

CEU students are increasingly interested in internships as a way of putting what they learn in the classroom to practice while gaining relevant professional experience.



**Sharing information about your career path via an alumni career talk.**

Students and alumni value opportunities to learn about the career paths of members of the CEU alumni community. It's especially meaningful when an alum makes time to speak about the ups and downs of his or her path.



**Hold an employer information session for CEU students and alumni.**

Many alumni make arrangements to represent their employer for an employer information session. Let us know if the work your employer is doing is relevant for the CEU community and you think the organization might be interested in taking on emerging CEU talent. We're glad to arrange an in-person or virtual employer information session.

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**Contact Details:**

Cristina Balint-Nagy, Career Services Manager,  
[BalintnagyC@ceu.edu](mailto:BalintnagyC@ceu.edu)

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## Appendix 1

### CEU Alumni Chapter Action Plan Proposal

Your chapter (country/city):

Your name:

As a chapter leader you'll be expected to actively engage other alums in your area in activities, projects and initiatives to keep the CEU spirit alive. Your action plan will be a living and breathing document which will evolve along the way as you develop your chapter. However, it would be great if you could share some initial thoughts on what your objectives will be and how you plan to achieve them.

When thinking about events/projects/initiatives for your local chapter, you may consider the following areas:

- *Alumni events* – formal and informal alumni get together, happy hours, holiday celebrations, group trips, meetings with CEU staff, faculty and leadership in your area etc.
- *Recruitment events* – promote CEU and help attract perspective students, organize Q&A session to help answer their questions related to application process, life at CEU, choosing a department and so on; organize Pre-Departure Orientation for newly accepted students etc.
- *Career events* – become career mentor or share career related experience, knowledge, job announcements with or refer your fellow alumni and CEU students.
- *Fundraising events* – organize events to raise funds to support future CEU students, your department, CEU campus, research initiatives etc.

Objective for the Chapter	Events/Projects/Initiatives	Communication channels	Timeline

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### How can we help?

Have a great idea for an alumni event/project/initiative in your area? [Let us know](#). The Alumni Relations team will be happy to help with promoting your alumni event by sending out e-mail invites to local alumni, advertising on our social media and website, and much more.

### Useful Links

You can direct your fellow alumni and recent graduates to our website to check the [Benefits and Services](#) CEU provides to its graduates. [Here](#) you can find a list of different ways alumni could be involved, and [here](#) existing funds alumni are encouraged to support. Get in touch with other [CEU chapter leaders](#) to learn from their experiences and check the full list of [Alumni Groups Worldwide](#).